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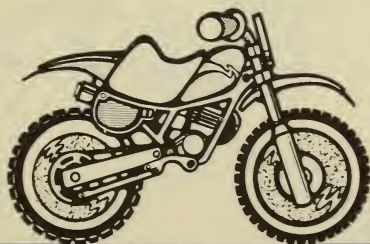
TREAD LIGHTLY
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in South Dakota

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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Rocky
Mountain
Region



PREPARED BY
Forest Service

MOTOR VEHICLES ON WILD LANDS

They're a real challenge? You know that.

Your new dirt bike seems to rear up and paw the ground as you sight a steep hillside.

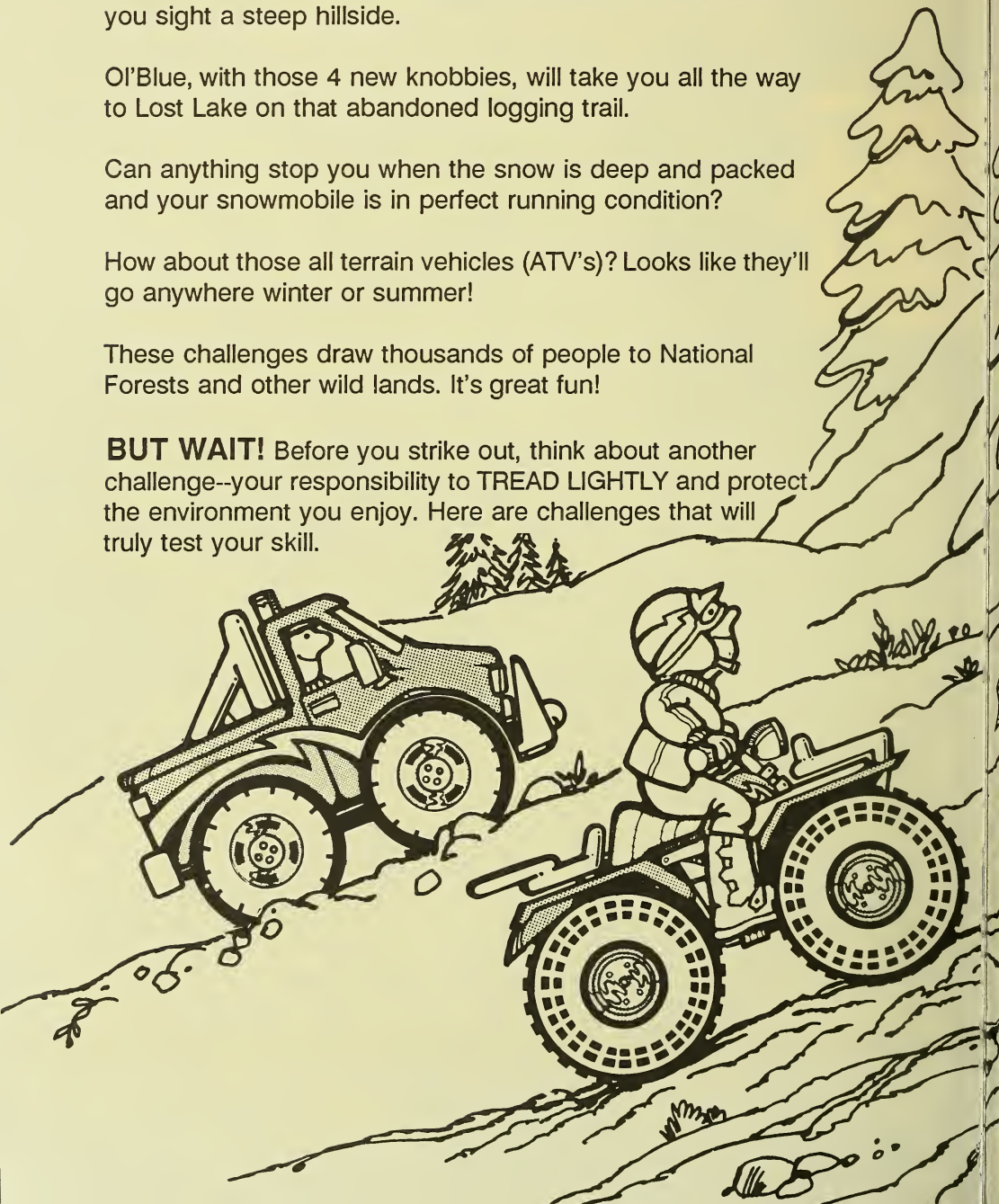
O'l'Blue, with those 4 new knobbies, will take you all the way to Lost Lake on that abandoned logging trail.

Can anything stop you when the snow is deep and packed and your snowmobile is in perfect running condition?

How about those all terrain vehicles (ATV's)? Looks like they'll go anywhere winter or summer!

These challenges draw thousands of people to National Forests and other wild lands. It's great fun!

BUT WAIT! Before you strike out, think about another challenge--your responsibility to **TREAD LIGHTLY** and protect the environment you enjoy. Here are challenges that will truly test your skill.





COMMON SITUATIONS

National Forests offer maps showing roads and trails throughout each forest. Contact the Forest or District Office to find out whether or not a trail or road will be closed. Other agencies provide similar information for lands they manage. Signs and barriers also guide you. The following are common situations you may encounter.

Open Most of the Time

Main roads, unless wet and soft. These are excellent snowmobile routes if they are not plowed during winter.

Logging and other primitive roads when dry. These offer challenges for 4-wheel drives, dirt bikes, and ATV's. Snowmobilers find them fun too, unless they are open only to cross country skiers.

Trails outside Wildernesses. Some are open only to foot, horse, or cross country ski travel. Others are open to trail machines winter and summer, but NOT to full-size 4-wheel drives.

Gentle, open countryside. An occasional 4-wheel drive or ATV all do little harm IF the ground is DRY. Frequent vehicle travel may be stopped, however, to prevent creation of unwanted roads and trails.

Closed Part Time

Wildlife rearing areas. Tracts, such as elk calving grounds, may be closed in the spring. Disturbance at this time can drive animals from important habitat. Vehicle travel may be allowed during the rest of the year.

Wet, soft roads and trails (outside Wildernesses). These routes are sometimes closed during spring thaw or fall snow storms. Though it's fun to test vehicle power in the mud, the resulting damage costs tax dollars for repairs. Normal travel is resumed when surfaces dry out.

Wildlife winter habitat. Wintering areas may be off limits, particularly when food is scarce late in the season. Snowmobiles and ATV's disturb weakened animals, forcing them to use limited energy reserves. Later, as animals move to summer feeding areas, vehicle travel is resumed.

Resource roads. Narrow mountain roads are closed from time to time to prevent accidents when logging, oil drilling, or mining traffic is heavy.

Closed Year-Round

Wilderness. All motorized (and mechanical) vehicles are barred by law. Foot or horseback travel affords visitors a frontier experience.

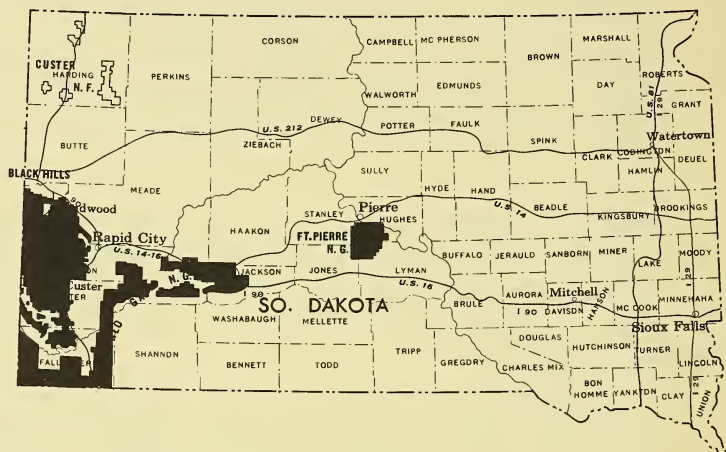
Meadows, new forests, steep hillsides, streambanks, and lakeshores. Vehicle travel is excluded to protect delicate meadow plants and young trees, grasses and shrubs; and to prevent scars, soil erosion, and water pollution.

Roads and trails "put to bed." These may be resource roads no longer used for logging, mining, etc.; or steep trails replaced by easier ones. They are smoothed to conform with the land, blocked, and planted with vegetation--"put to bed."

Habitat for endangered wildlife. The habitat, or home, for threatened and endangered species like grizzly bears may be closed to prevent disturbance and help these animals re-establish themselves.

NOTE: If your organization is planning an event, or wants to establish routes for recreation vehicle travel, contact the local land manager or owner. Through cooperation, projects may be organized with minimal damage to the environment.

SOUTH DAKOTA'S NATIONAL FORESTS



FOR MORE INFORMATION

National Forests

National Forest and Grassland Maps provide detailed information showing roads, trails and areas. Maps cost \$2. Contact Forest Supervisor Offices nearest your areas of interest.

Black Hills National Forest
RR2, Box 200, Highway 385 North
Custer, South Dakota 57730-9501
(605) 673-2251

Fort Pierre National Grassland
708 Main Street, P.O. Box 425
Wall, South Dakota 57790
(605) 279-2125

Other Public Lands

Contact these agencies for information about travel on public lands under their management.

Bureau of Land Management
Montana State Office
Granite Tower
222 N. 32nd Street
P.O. Box 36800
Billings, MT 59107
(406) 657-6564

Department of Game and Fish
State Office Building
Pierre, South Dakota 57501
605-773-3393

Parks and Outdoor Recreation
Anderson Building
Pierre, South Dakota 57501
605-773-3391

Private Lands

Contact the owners for permission to travel on private land. You may have to ask around to locate them. Carefully follow their instructions. If you do, you'll win friends and future access. If you don't, everyone will be closed out.



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